School Closure Toolkit: Academics

Summary

While the concerns for the well-being of our students and staff remains everyone's top priority, strategies to support continued learning and academic growth is critical.

Considerations for learning activities that are based upon content and skills already experienced by students will be most appropriate at this time, given the anxiousness that many students and adults are facing. As you make plans for digital learning and other opportunities to engage children, we encourage you to find ways to maintain your focus on the same things that matter in every classroom: student safety, building strong relationships with students and families, and creating equitable access to learning by accommodating students' different learning needs. District and school staff must make decisions about the best way to support student learning during time away from school. A district must understand the digital capacity of its community, the devices available to students, and the flexibility parents, teachers, and school leaders have to support the needs of students. In this document, you will find:

- A checklist to help guide your decisions about your approach to instruction
- Best practices for a variety of learning opportunities including paper-based, blended activity-based, and full digital curriculum approaches
- Sample schedules and timelines
- A list of digital online resources available for free to all districts

Contacts

- For questions related to high school coursework and graduation requirements, contact Jean Luna at Jean.Luna@tn.gov
- For questions related to instructional materials and academic content, contact Lisa Coons at Lisa.Coons@tn.gov

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CHECKLIST

For decisions related to sample schedules or selection of materials

2

BEST PRACTICES

For structuring learning to meet the developmental needs of students

3

RECOMMENDATIONS

Sample schedules and procedures.

Online Learning
Provides resources for online learning structures at home.

Paper & Blended
Guidance for paper and blended student learning at home

Student Work
Guidance and ideas for assigning and grading student work online and in paper.

Checklist

Below is a brief checklist that districts and schools should consider during periods of closure. Instructional Planning Checklist

- ☐ Identify the team member(s) who will be responsible for developing and implementing the instructional continuity plan.
- ☐ Determine your district's approach to student learning during school closure (see the "best practices" section of this document to decide which approach will work for your schools and your district).
- ☐ Determine which content area(s) your school(s) will focus on in the elementary, middle, and high school grade bands.
- ☐ As applicable, assess current availability of digital resources, internet capacity, and in-home instructional materials. Please make sure that this needs assessment is inclusive and accommodating of all families.
- ☐ Create a plan to supplement Wi-Fi or digital access if you plan to use a fully digital platform or blended approach. The "resources" section of this document offers digital resources and support if you plan to use a digital or blended approach.
- ☐ Develop an instructional staff schedule and set of responsibilities, aligned to the platform you select.
- ☐ Develop expectations for recommended learning schedules during the day for students at home, based on the delivery method selected, as outlined in the checklists below).
- ☐ Develop a communication plan with families regarding your instructional continuity plan:
  - ☐ Determine the role of school leaders and frequency for school updates for families
  - ☐ Integrate academic and nutrition messaging to be seamless for families

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHT: MURFREESBORO CITY

Salem Elementary School in Murfreesboro City has created a daily "At Home" learning guide for students and parents: http://www.salemelementary.net/at_home_learning. Further, school leadership continues with routines like the Morning Message and teacher communication with students and families to ensure that all stakeholders feel connected and supported throughout any periods of closure. The dual focus on academics and whole child is critical to ongoing success.

- ☐ Develop and communicate expectations for principals regarding:
  - ☐ Communication with teachers (frequency and focus)
  - ☐ Setting expectations with teachers and monitoring instructional progress
  - ☐ Gathering feedback from teachers to inform real-time improvement to systems and structures, and for ongoing problem-solving
- ☐ Ongoing communication with families including frequency, types of content, and alignment to district messaging
- ☐ Develop and communicate expectations for teachers regarding:
  - ☐ Where and when they work. See the "staffing" toolkit for additional guidance.
  - ☐ Their role in facilitating digital or packet-based instruction and a regular engagement plan with students
  - ☐ Grading and feedback to students
  - ☐ Tracking student progress and identifying content/access gaps
- ☐ Develop and communicate expectations for other school staff (as applicable to academics) regarding:
  - ☐ Where and when they work. See the "staffing" toolkit for additional guidance.
  - ☐ Their role in facilitating any instructional content with students, with teachers, etc.
  - ☐ Communication with families
  - ☐ Support with information systems or other reporting requirements
  - ☐ Tracking student progress & identifying content/access gaps
- ☐ Assess current access to family/student contact information and develop a plan for ensuring teachers and families/students can be in contact in the selected plan, considering necessary privacy protections.
- ☐ Identify and coordinate with potential community partners or other local resources that may be able to assist with your plan (e.g. libraries, non-profits, youth-based programs, existing district partners, etc.)

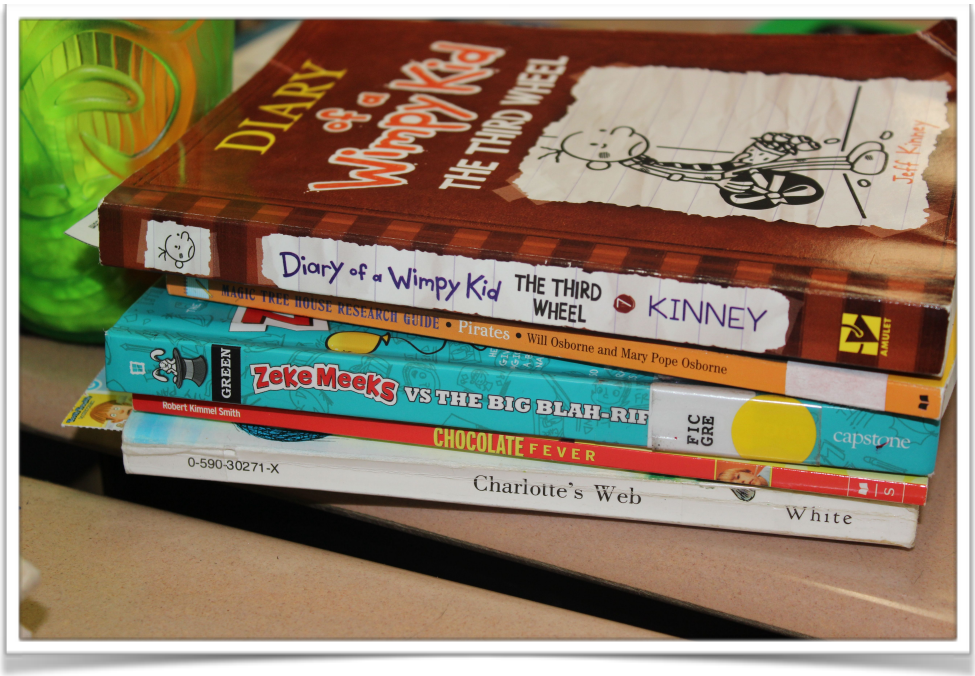
Considerations for Full Online or Blended Learning Opportunities

- ☐ Review existing resources for available materials that are the best fit for specific district needs.
  - ☐ Ensure that materials are easy-to-follow (with or without family support), clearly sequenced, and duplicative of what students have mastered to allow for independent work at home.
  - ☐ Additional or bonus materials covering new content may be used and included.
- ☐ Determine if teachers will be responsible for choices around scope and use of content and assignments, or if the district will have a consistent approach across schools or the district.
- ☐ Select the material(s) the district will use for each grade and content area.
- ☐ Adjust plan to meet the needs of all learners. See the "special populations" portion of this toolkit for additional guidance.
- ☐ Assess student device and internet access to determine a plan to ensure all students can access content. (See the "Technology" toolkit for additional guidance.)
  - ☐ Identify the potential learning and logistical needs of students and families to support digital or blended learning options.

- For those students who need support to gain access to the internet or a device, please ensure that those students receive this support, or a comparable paper-based option. This should be delivered at the same time as other online options are available.
- Assess teacher access to devices and internet if they are working remotely.
- Identify the potential professional learning needs of teachers to facilitate digital or blended learning options.
- Develop a plan for technical support with technology platforms, Wi-Fi access, or hardware access for students and educators at home.
- Consider creating a district call center for questions, technical assistance, and customer service

Considerations for Paper Learning Opportunities

- Review existing resources for available materials to convert to print options.
  - Ensure that the printed materials are easy-to-follow (with or without family support), clearly sequenced, and duplicative of what students have already mastered to allow for independent work from home.
  - Additional or bonus materials covering new content may be used and included.
- Develop a plan for how materials will be printed and organized.
- Create a logistics plan for delivering packets.
  - Consider how to leverage meal delivery options to facilitate delivery of packet-based content.
  - Consider mailing to home addresses and confirming that all student addresses are accurate.
  - Ensure that there are alternative “pick-up sites,” so that all students have multiple ways to access work.
- Determine if and how students will submit completed work, and if sanitization is needed.
- Determine if and how teachers will provide feedback to and support students as they work.



Best Practices

Logistics Strategy for Academic Learning

As you narrow your delivery approach for supporting students, you will also need to prepare teachers, communicate expectations to families, and provide logistical updates to all stakeholders. When developing district expectations specific to student learning opportunities, districts need to:

Establish routines for daily/weekly communication updates for teachers and school leaders

- Districts need to communicate daily with school leaders to ensure that families are getting frequent instructional updates
- School leaders should communicate daily with teachers related to expectations, supports, and provide talking points when classroom teachers speak with families
- School leaders and/or teachers should communicate daily with families related to updates, motivation to complete assignments, and encouragement for what is to come

Provide clear expectations for how each stakeholder should be involved in the learning process

- Parents need to understand the learning expectations for their child(ren) and the assignments that should be completed
- Classroom teachers should communicate regularly with students to reinforce stability and consistency, and to provide feedback and support as students complete work at home
- School leaders must communicate work expectations for teachers and expectations for families

Notate Necessary Supports for Students

	In the elementary	*In the secondary*
With online and digital communication	Distinguish between tools students can use on their own, tools any adult can help students use, and tools that require teacher support.	Maintain teachers' roles as mediators and facilitators of learning—children and young adults still need their academic and relational supports.
With phone- and paper-based communication	Daily practice with emerging skills is especially important for younger children: encourage families to structure short, frequent bursts of math and reading practice each day.	Identify a single school-based point of contact (e.g., a homeroom or advisory teacher) for every student who can field and relay any questions from them and their families.

Best Practices for K-5 Learners

Choosing the Right Approach for Young Learners

K – 2nd grade learners should experience digital learning for 60 minutes or less for daily instruction. Other opportunities should focus on blended or packet-based learning. In addition, family supports need to be more prevalent when sending K-2 learning resources home, which should consider any additional supports that might be needed. Finally, learning opportunities should include play-based and exploratory activities. See the "Resources" section of this document for additional information.

3rd – 5th grade learners should also have limited direct digital instruction each day. Students in grades 3 - 5 should have independent practice activities in all content areas as well as include exploration and inquiry opportunities with their family. See the "Resources" section of this document for additional information.

In consideration of elementary ELA instruction, even with access to rich, plentiful content online, elementary students need ample opportunities to engage with new learning in multi-sensory ways and reinforcement activities through a digital platform.

- Writing should include pencil-and-paper practice even if the results are difficult for teachers to view. Developing handwriting skills is valuable even for students who are simultaneously learning to type.
- Touch, sound, and physical movement are also valuable learning opportunities, especially when accompanied by rich language use.
- Talking with adults about the world develops students' oral language, conceptual knowledge, and vocabulary skills, which contribute directly to reading comprehension.
- Access to grade-level texts with read-aloud opportunities is important, and districts may want to find ways to get identified texts into the hands of students and families.
- Wordplay—and, for the youngest students, play with speech sounds even when they don't form words—helps develop awareness of phonemes and other aspects of language.
- Conversational give-and-take is especially important: the experience of passing words and meaning back and forth with others.

There are also many multi-sensory ways students can access mathematics.

- For the youngest students having the opportunity to orally recite the names of numbers, count objects, and make connections between the names of numbers and how many objects are represented in groups supports their early number sense.
- As students get older, students need the opportunity to talk through how they think about combining numbers in various ways that are encountered in their daily live.
- Students in upper elementary school could be daily making connections to the mathematical operations and their daily lives particularly as it relates to fractions.
- Digital platforms offer opportunities for students to practice skill-based mathematics.
- Online games let students practice computational mathematics in ways that are fun, engaging, and tightly aligned to specific desired competencies.

Sample Daily Schedule for Blended or Packet-Based Activities

Activity	Duration	Frequency
Reading (content specific)	45 min	Align reading to content or knowledge-building to support additional learning in science/social studies
Independent Reading	30 min	Student-selected
Writing (grounded in text)	20 – 30 mins	
Math	30 - 45 mins	
Science/Social Studies	30 mins	May be incorporated into reading (above) with activity
Physical Movement Activities	45 mins	
Creativity Activities	30 – 45 mins	2 – 3 times per week (art, music, dance, etc.)

Best Practices for 6-12 Learners

Students in 6th – 12th grades should feel connected to their teachers whether a district chooses to continue learning through a packet-based approach, a blended set of learning opportunities, or launches fully digital content structures. Districts also need to consider that much of the content in these grades might be unfamiliar to family members. Offering digital resources or teacher virtual office hours will allow students to maintain support from teachers.

If a district chooses a **traditional packet-based approach**, content area work should focus on skill reinforcement and practice opportunities.

- Multiple content areas should be represented
- Extension activities should be offered
- Resources should be reviewed in advance
- Supports should be built into the packets, including concrete examples and directions
- Provide options, as available, to address student interest and needs (ex. fluency practice, games, procedural practice, and real-world application practice)
- Build in time for feedback loops
- If activities are dependent upon one another in order for students to complete them successfully, intentionally build in time to support the ability to provide feedback

If a district chooses to use a **blended-learning activity approach**, district and school leaders should ensure that students have multiple content opportunities weekly.

- Content for ELA, math, science and social studies should be represented
- Opportunities for writing should be included every day
- Each activity should be connected to a larger body of learning, and the activities should be seen as meaningful and purposeful.

If a district chooses a **fully digital platform for learning**, students should be provided structured opportunities to interact digitally with content and receive consistent feedback from teachers.

- Consider digital programs that allows for students to see instructional content explained and the opportunity to receive instant feedback on how well they are completing tasks
- Consider the opportunity for teachers to receive assignments quickly for providing feedback
- Consider student interaction and the chance to read and respond to one another's writing, annotate texts with comments and questions that their peers can see, chat orally and in writing about academic texts and topics, and refine ideas through discussion and debate.

Each of the schedules below assumes alignment to the courses in which students are enrolled.

Sample Daily Schedule for 6-12 Blended or Packet-Based Activities

Activity	Time	Frequency
Reading (content specific)	45 mins	Align reading to content or knowledge-building to support additional learning in science/ social studies
Independent Reading	30 mins	Student-selected
Writing (grounded in text)	20 - 30 mins	
Math	30 - 45 mins	
Science/ Social Studies	30 mins	May be incorporated into reading (above) with activity
Physical Movement Activities	45 mins	
Creativity Activities	30 – 45 mins	2 – 3 times per week (art, music, dance, etc.)

Sample Daily Schedule for 6-12 Digital Platform Approach

Activity	Time	Frequency
Reading (module based)	45 mins	
Independent Reading	30 mins	Student-selected
Writing (module based)	20 – 30 mins	
Math (module based)	30 mins	
Math fluency	20 mins	
Science/ Social Studies	30 mins	May be incorporated into reading or stand-alone
Physical Movement Activities	45 mins	
Creativity Activities	30 – 45 mins	2 – 3 times per week; may also include CCTE activities

Resource List

Resources below are either open source full curricula or resources developed by publishers to fully supplement their existing curricula for school closure purposes.

Base Materials for Core Content

Resource	Content Area and Grade	Description
Benchmark	TBD	Contacted. Waiting for publisher response.
Bookworms	ELA, K-5	This curriculum was reviewed for Tennessee's 2019 adoption but was not selected. Since that time, the publisher has revamped options, and districts may find some valuable resources for planning home-based learning experiences for literacy.
Cengage	TBD	Contacted. Waiting for publisher response.

Core Knowledge Language Arts	ELA, K-8	**Supplemental ELA Resource: Amplify Reading K-5** Free, digital, adaptive resource to help all students continue their literacy development in any remote learning environment for the remainder of this school year. Register here: https://amplify.com/remotelearning/reading/ **Amplify 6-8 Core Curriculum: Amplify ELA** Free, downloadable versions of all print resources for current ELA users. Access to these resources is at www.amplify.com/remotelearning Beginning next week, material will be released to all Tennessee teachers, including non-Amplify users, to help them navigate remote learning with their middle school students. This will include novel studies and units customized for independent learning. Various activities and scaffolding will be provided throughout to support comprehension.
EL Education	ELA, K-5	Open source materials for knowledge-building and foundational literacy skills. Both teacher and student materials include digital and print options. Materials are available for any district to use but require a free account to access.
Eureka	Math, K-Precalculus	Flexible digital curriculum that can also be printed and used as "at-home learning" for daily lessons. This free resource is available through the extended school closure.
Fishtank	ELA, math, science, social studies, K-12	These ELA, math, science, and social studies resources provide educators with a fully-functioning online curriculum. Materials are available for any district to use but require a free account to access. Trade books must be purchased separately.
Guidebooks	ELA, 3-12	Open source materials focused on knowledge-building. Trade books must be purchased separately.
iCEV Remote Learning	CCTE	Multiple CCTE curricula in a digital platform. Curricula includes fully functioning digital platforms for teachers to design online learning courses from tradition CTE courses.
McGraw Hill	TBD	Contacted. Waiting for publisher response.
OpenSciEd	Science, 6-8	Only select units are available at this time. Additional units are under development. Units can be downloaded as printable PDFs and are also available in print from the company's print vendor.
Pearson	TBD	Contacted. Waiting for publisher response.

Scholastic Learn at Home	All	Twenty-day, open source materials for knowledge-building and foundational literacy skills. Both teacher and student materials include digital and print options. Materials are available through April 20th. Username: Learning20 Password: Clifford **BookFlix (PreK-3):** https://digital.scholastic.com/site/launch/bkflix?ucn=642726498 (links lead to login—see below for credentials) **TrueFlix (Grades 3+):** https://digital.scholastic.com/site/launch/tfx?ucn=642726498 **ScienceFlix (Grades 5+):** https://digital.scholastic.com/site/launch/sfx?ucn=642726498 **Watch & Learn Library (PreK-3):** https://digital.scholastic.com/site/launch/watchandlearn?ucn=642726498
TN Digital	All	An online repository of all of the State of Tennessee's open access learning materials. TN Digital is working with all approved TN publishers to supply teachers, students, parents, and administrators with easy access to learning materials, which includes everything from lesson plans to worksheets, and from educational videos to assessments. TN Digital is owned and operated by Tennessee Book Company through their digital arm, Thrivist. Full access is available through via the link posted in the resource column and can search for lessons, publishers, and videos. More information about this resource can be found at: https://www.tndigital.org/faq.
Zearn	Math, K-5	This fully digital curriculum with internal progress monitoring for teachers is available at no cost during current school closures. Access requires a district, school, or individual account. Printable homework aligned to each module is available with teacher accounts. Zearn is also offering distance learning training for districts and teachers. See more here.

Learning and Engagement Opportunities

Source	Content Area (s)	Description
Discovery Education	Science, math, social studies	An online collection of resources that is free to affected schools and districts through the end of the school year.
EVERFI	Financial literacy, social and emotional learning, health and wellness	This digital resource provides standalone, digital lessons on various topics.
HippoCampus	All	This free resource provides thousands of standards-aligned videos to reinforce students' learning of past instructional concepts.
Illustrative Mathematics	Math, K-12	This digitally-based resource provides teachers with student tasks and other content (note that IM has also developed a comprehensive curriculum, which is available through Open Up Resources). The full curriculum resource may not be fully aligned to TN standards and is therefore purposefully not listed in that section.
i-Ready.com/AtHome	Reading and math, K-8	This library of K-8 p*rintable* at-home activity packs is designed to reinforce key concepts and provide students with valuable self-directed exercises and practice during extended absences from school. The at-home activity packs are of high quality and aligned to academic standards.
Khan Academy	Math, science, engineering, art, world history	This website provides extensive, video-based tutorials to reinforce concept-based learning (though student tasks and instructional delivery are limited).
PHET	Science, math	This website provides engaging science activities using simulations. Thea activities are designed for students and families to engage in collaboratively.

Practice and Reinforcement Activities

Resource	Content	Description
Dreambox	Math	Free 90-day trial temporarily available for families that provides online and iPad-based adaptive mathematics games. Games reinforce conceptual development of math standards. This program is online as opposed to print focused.
Edmentum	Math, science, ELA	Printable games and worksheets with practice activities that can be used with a packet-based or e-learning approach and aligned to past classroom instruction.
Free Math	Math	Allows teachers to build online classrooms, assign activities, and grade assignments through a digital platform.
IXL	Math, ELA, science, social studies	Activities and quizzes; site offers 30-day free trials for educators.
Quizlet	Various	Study aid with online flashcards, quizzes, and more.

Printable Resources

Resource	Content	Description
ABCMouse	Reading, math, science, art	Online and printable resources focus on early learning (ages 2-8). Sign-in is required, but materials are free for the first 30 days.
Curriculum Associates	Reading, math	Printable activity packs address reading and math in grades K-8; the site also offers accompanying teacher guides, also printable, for math.
Edmentum	Various	Printable, grade-specific bundles of worksheets designed to be sent home with students.
Education.com	Various	Free, printable worksheets organized by grade level and subject. Pages are easily downloaded once a free account has been made.
K-5 Learning	ELA, math	This site offers an array of printable worksheets for grades K-5.
New Path Learning	ELA, math, science, social studies, ESL, Spanish	With this resource, make sure to elect Tennessee state standards in the link. Some worksheets and study guides are available for free, though others are accessible only with a paid membership.

Fine Arts Engagement Activities

Resource	Description
12 Museums with Online Virtual Tours	This article links to museums around the world offering virtual tours and online exhibits (best accessed digitally).
Art of Education	This suite of digital, teacher-facing resources includes a repository of online activities and more.
Davis Art	Through June 30, teachers have open access to a library of 25,000 fine art images as well as full use of student books and teacher editions. Most resources are best viewed online.
Metropolitan Museum of Art "MetKids"	The Met provides interactive maps, videos, and more digital content designed especially for kids ages 7-12.
Quaver Music	This site is offering free access to general music activities, most best accessed digitally, for all schools and students impacted by Covid-19.
Sight-Reading Factory	Exercises, designed to be viewed on electronic devices, support sight reading practice for musicians.
SmartMusic	This site offers free access through June 30 to a suite of web-based music education tools.